

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 TRSE-00 AID-05 CU-04

MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /080 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4055

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: LOWENSTEIN VISIT

REF: MANAGUA 3765

SUMMARY: AMB. LOWENSTEIN'S VISIT MADE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON KEY GROUPS. IT WAS ALSO MEDIA EVENT WITH FOCUS ON MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND DISRUPTION OF DIALOGUE AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY BY ACTIVISTS OF REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER). EMBASSY BELIEVES FOLLOW-ON VISITS WOULD FURTHER SOLIDIFY MESSAGE DELIVERED BY LOWENSTEIN. END SUMMARY

1. AMB ALLARD LOWENSTEIN MET FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS WITH TEN MEMBERS

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OF CONGRESS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEES. ALTHOUGH CONGRESSIONAL PRESIDENT CORNELIO HUECK ATTEMPTED TO DOMINATE DISCUSSION, OPPOSITION CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERS MANAGED TO PARTICIPATE AS URGED BY AMB. LOWENSTEIN. LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL PRESS AND SOMOZA-FAMILY NEWSPAPER NOVEDADES WERE PRESENT. NOVEDADES GAVE EXTENSIVE BUT SOMEWHAT DISTORTED COVERAGE TO GIVE AND TAKE DURING THE SESSION.

2. THE MAJOR POINTS OF THE MEETING WITH CONGRESSMEN WERE: THERE IS AN INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATION TO COOPERATE TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS; THE NECESSITY FOR FREE ELECTIONS TO PRODUCE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENTS WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE SUPPORT FOR REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISTS; A REQUIREMENT THAT GOVERNMENTS INSURE THAT EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE REACH INTENDED BENEFICIARIES AS A CONDITION FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE. HUECK ACCEPTED ALL THESE POINTS. IN TURN, HE ARGUED THAT NICARAGUA IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING ITS COMPLIANCE WITH ITS DEMOCRATIC GOALS, AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD AN OBLIGATION TO PROTECT ITS CITIZENS FROM TERRORIST VIOLENCE. THE EXCHANGE ON TERRORISM DID NOT LEAD TO POLARIZED POSITIONS BUT RATHER AGREEMENT THAT THE FIRST LINE MUST BE A DEMOCRATIC OUTLET FOR DISCONTENT AND SECONDLY A GOVERNMENT WOULD THEN HAVE SUPPORT IN PROTECTING THE MAJORITY FROM VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY AN OPPOSING MINORITY. HUECK SAID ALL THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA COULD AGREE ON THE POSITIONS EXPLAINED BY AMB. LOWENSTEIN AND CALLED FOR A HEMISPHERIC SUMMIT MEETING TO ESTABLISH A COMMON HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA.

3. DURING A PRIVATE LUNCH LOWENSTEIN FOLLOWED UP WITH HUECK ON THE NEED FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEES TO BECOME FUNCTIONAL AS A FORUM FOR AIRING CHARGES OF VIOLATIONS. LOWENSTEIN SAID HUECK PROMISED THAT ANY PRIVATE CITIZEN, GROUP OR MEMBER OF CONGRESS WOULD BE ABLE TO PRESENT A HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINT AND IT WOULD BE INVESTIGATED. LOWENSTEIN ALSO FURTHER EMPHASIZED THE U.S. INTEREST IN AND FOCUS ON THE ISSUE OF FREE ELECTIONS TAKING PLACE IN NICARAGUA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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4. AT THE NICARAGUAN AUTONOMOUS NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAN), AMB. LOWENSTEIN AND ACCOMPANYING EMBOFFS WERE MET BY VICE RECTOR AND ESCORTED ACROSS CAMPUS TO LIBRARY AUDITORIUM WHERE ABOUT 35 INVITED REPRESENTATIVES OF FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION, AND STUDENTS WERE PRESENT. LOWENSTEIN EXPLAINED ORIGIN AND INTENT OF ADMINISTRATION HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY WITH EMPHASIS ON HUMANITARIAN CONCERN FOR PROBLEMS BOTH IN U.S. AS WELL AS OTHER COUNTRIES. US ASSISTANCE WOULD BE CHanneled TO WHERE IT WOULD HELP MOST. HE ALSO RESPONDED TO TWO OR THREE QUESTIONS BEFORE REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER)-LED GROUP ARRIVED WITH BULLHORNS AND BEGAN ANTI-US, PRO-REVOLUTIONARY CHANTS WHICH DROWNED OUT ATTEMPTS AT CONTINUED DIALOGUE. STUDENTS JAMMED AUDITORIUM AND PRESSED AGAINST OPEN WINDOWS OF BUILDING CHANTING ON CUE THAT DIALOGUE WITH IMPERIALISTS WAS IMPOSSIBLE AND THAT VISITORS MUST LEAVE. ALTERNATING WITH CHANTS, STUDENT LEADERS WHO WERE IN AUDITORIUM BY INVITATION MADE SPEECHES DENOUNCING US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS FACADE DESIGNED TO MASK CAPITALISTIC IMPERIALISM AND DENOUNCING OPPRESSION OF PATRIOTIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS AROUND THE WORLD AS WELL AS RACIAL MINORITIES WITHIN THE U.S. AT ONE POINT A STUDENT TRIED TO CALL FOR FURTHER DIALOGUE IN ORDER TO CONVINCE THE VISITORS OF THE ERROR OF US POLICY IN SUPPORTING SOMOZA. HE ALSO WAS SHOUTED

DOWN BY SMALL GROUP OF STUDENTS WHO WERE APPARENTLY ACTING ON CUE OF STUDENT LEADERS WHOSE OBJECTIVE WAS TO FORCE VISITORS' DEPARTURE. UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS RELUCTANTLY AGREED THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE, AND AMB. LOWENSTEIN, AFTER FURTHER EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH DIALOGUE, FINALLY ACCEPTED THAT SCHEDULE AND PROBLEM OF SPEAKING THROUGH INTERPRETER RESTRICTED POSSIBILITY OF OUTWAITING DISRUPTING STUDENT ACTIVISTS. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THREAT TO PHYSICAL SAFETY OF VISITORS, PARTICULARLY AS STUDENT LEADERS REMINDED DEMONSTRATORS THAT THEY MUST ACT RESPONSIBLY. MEETING WAS COVERED IN LA PRENSA AND NOVEDADES. LA PRENSA'S SENSATIONALIST COVERAGE SUGGESTED VISITORS WERE NEARLY LYNCHED. CLIPPINGS WILL BE POUCHED.

5. ON RETURN TO EMBASSY, LOWENSTEIN MET WITH LOCAL INTELLECTUAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS, INCLUDING SOME ON FAR-LEFT OF NICARAGUAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL SPECTRUM. THERE, THE MESSAGE WAS THAT ASSISTANCE FROM THE US IS INTERVENTION IN SUPPORT OF SOMOZA: WHAT THEY WANTED WAS AN END TO THIS US INTERVENTION. AMB. LOWENSTEIN DREW THEM INTO AN EXPLORATION OF HOW US COULD HAVE A ROLE THROUGH ASSISTANCE IN TRYING TO BREAK VICIOUS CIRCLE OF POLITICAL REPRESSION AND ECONOMIC INJUSTICE. THE INTELLECTUALS ARGUED FOR US TO END ASSISTANCE, THEREBY FURTHERING THEIR ABILITY TO END POLITICAL REPRESSION AFTER WHICH THEY WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE PROBLEM OF ECONOMIC INJUSTICE. BUT THEY EVENTUALLY SPLIT ON WHETHER PROPERLY SUPERVISED HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE WHICH REACHED TO POOREST CITIZENS SHOULD BE CONTINUED. THEY REFERRED TO ONE CASE ON ON-GOING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

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P R 161508 AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4056
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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6. NEXT AMB. LOWENSTEIN ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFFS MET WITH ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO AND CAPUCHIN PRIESTS IN MEETINGS ADDED TO SCHEDULE (REFTEL) AT LOWENSTEIN'S REQUEST AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. ARCHBISHOP CONFIRMED THAT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HIM INDICATED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF CAMPESINOS APPEARED TO HAVE DROPPED OFF. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS TO CHURCH ACTIVISM AND US POLICY (CONGRESSIONAL FOCUS ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE). HE DESCRIBED BACKGROUND OF PASTORAL MESSAGE AND SAID HE HAD OBTAINED WRITTEN DETAILED REPORT FROM CAPUCHIN BISHOP BEFORE HE AGREED TO SUPPORT CAPUCHIN EFFORTS TO HAVE PASTORAL MESSAGE ISSUED.

7. DURING A BRIEF VISIT AT THE CAPUCHIN HOUSE, LOWENSTEIN MET WITH FATHERS PAT, FLORIAN, AND ONE OTHER PRIEST. THEY DISCUSSED THE RECENT HIATUS IN REPORTS OF DISAPPEARANCES OR DEATHS OF CAMPESINOS.
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HE ALSO RAISED THE ALLEGED MASSACRES IN KASKITA AND VARILLAL. LOWENSTEIN URGED THEM TO DEVELOP FURTHER DETAILS AND CORROBORATION OF THE INFORMATION THEY HAVE RECEIVED ON THESE INCIDENTS.

8. UPON RETURN TO THE EMBASSY, AMB. LOWENSTEIN MET WITH CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERS SANDINO, CHAMORRO, AND ZELAYA AT THEIR REQUEST. THEY EXPLAINED THEIR LACK OF ABILITY TO FORCE HEARINGS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE CONGRESS. AMB. LOWENSTEIN INFORMED THEM OF HIS COMMITMENT FROM HUECK THAT CASES WOULD BE HEARD AND URGED THEM TO TEST THAT COMMITMENT AND KEEP HIM INFORMED. IN EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF 1978 MAYORALTY ELECTIONS, THE CONSERVATIVES ARGUED THE NECESSITY OF SOME ACT WHICH WOULD CONVINCE THE CITIZENS THEIR VOTES WOULD BE COUNTED AND THAT THE ELECTIONS WOULD NOT BE STOLEN BY THE SOMOZA REGIME. LOWENSTEIN SAID THAT THE REGIME SHOULD NOW HAVE A CLEAR MESSAGE THAT WE WOULD BE WATCHING THOSE ELECTIONS CLOSELY AND FURTHER COMMITTED HIMSELF TO A PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT IN THE U.N. THE PCN LEADERS WERE VERY APPRECIATIVE.

9. AT DINNER FOR SELECTED GON MINISTERS, LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS, AND NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDERS, AMB. LOWENSTEIN AGAIN EMPHASIZED NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC EXPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE TO PREVENT POPULAR

SUPPORT FOR TERRORISTS AND THE NEED FOR EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE TO REACH THE INTENDED BENEFICIARIES OR ELSE U.S. CONGRESS WOULD NOT SUPPORT SUCH ASSISTANCE. GON INVITEES DEFERRED TO LUIS PALLAIS DEBAYLE, CONGRESSIONAL VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF NOVEDADES TO ARGUE CULTURAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT OF NICARAGUA AS FACTOR WHICH MUST BE UNDERSTOOD IN APPLYING U.S. POLICY TO THIS COUNTRY. THIS THEME WAS FOLLOWED UP BY VICE FOREIGN MINISTER BODAN WHO ARGUED NICARAGUA IS 60 YEARS BEHIND U.S. AND WOULD HAVE NOT PROBLEM MEASURING UP TO US HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS 60 YEARS AGO BUT IT WAS NOT FAIR FOR U.S. TO JUDGE NICARAGUA BY U.S. STANDARDS TODAY. MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT MORA SUGGESTED HEMISPHERIC MEETING OF PRESIDENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

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10. COMMENT: AMB. LOWENSTEIN'S WHIRLWIND VISIT HAD A VERY FAVORABLE IMPACT ON FURTHER SENSITIZING GON AND PUBLIC TO COMMITMENT OF US TO BROAD HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. FURTHER, BOTH LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS AND OPPOSITION CONSERVATIVES REACTED VERY FAVORABLY TO MESSAGE THEY RECEIVED. IN OTHER MEETINGS HE REQUESTED, AMB. LOWENSTEIN WAS ABLE TO DEVELOP FIRST-HAND IMPRESSION OF CHURCH VIEWS ON CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. EVEN MEETING AT UNIVERSITY, DESPITE IT BEING INTERRUPTED, WAS OF MAJOR VALUE IN EMBASSY'S EFFORT TO BEGIN BREAKING THROUGH ANTI-US PROPAGANDA WHICH HAS GONE LARGELY UNDISPUTED IN THE PAST. EMBASSY BELIEVES FURTHER PROGRESS IN SENSITIZING NICARAGUANS TO U.S. CONCERNS AND PERCEPTIONS, NOT ONLY WITH STUDENTS BUT ALSO WITH OTHER SECTORS OF NICARAGUA SOCIETY SUCH AS TECHNOCRATS, GUARD OFFICERS, BUSINESS, AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTAL MOVEMENTS, WILL BE POSSIBLE AS A RESULT OF LOWENSTEIN VISIT. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE MOMENTUM GENERATED BY MAJOR PUBLIC FOCUS ON THIS VISIT BUT WOULD ALSO WELCOME RETURN VISIT BY LOWENSTEIN, AMB. YOUNG, MS. DERIAN, ASST SECTY TODMAN, OR OTHER PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATION SPOKESPERSONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. EMBASSY BELIEVES SUCH VISITS WOULD BE WELL-RECEIVED BY GON. CONGRESSIONAL PRESIDENT HUECK INVITED LOWENSTEIN TO RETURN FOR LONGER STAY AND TO VISIT ANYWHERE IN COUNTRY HE WISHED. SENATE PRESIDENT RENER INVITED LOWENSTEIN TO RETURN TO VIEW FEBRUARY 1978 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

RUBENSTEIN

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Message Attributes

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